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TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 1909.

**BANKING REFORM AND POLITICS.**  
Banking reform is fast becoming the most absorbing topic of newspaper discussion in the State. With recent bank failures fresh in its mind, the press is taking up the subject and is advocating new legislation for the protection of State bank depositors. In the main the papers insist upon thorough and comprehensive reforms that will place the State banks upon a firm and stable basis.

The Norfolk Landmark, however, apparently views the prospect with concern. It is particularly apprehensive that the proposed Bureau of Banking may become a haven for some politician, whose functions shall be more nominal than real, more profitable than protective.

The Landmark is thoroughly correct in insisting that the banks be kept out of politics, but it is, we think, wrong in supposing that bank examination by State officials will assume a political aspect. The bill already drafted by the Banking Association contains ample protection against the creation of a bureau that will be a political plum. It provides that the commissioner shall be a practical banker, and that he shall appoint his own examiners. The latter are not intended to be destitute political wards of powerful legislators.

They are to be experts, who shall move from place to place and inspect banks without warning. They should no more be politicians than national bank examiners are.

The suggestion that the Corporation Commission employ experts to examine banks will hardly meet the crying needs of present conditions. The laws to-day provide for such inspection, but they cannot be enforced with success. Bank examination cannot be effective unless it is under the supervision of a trained man, intimately acquainted with the condition of every bank in the State. With the many other duties which it has to perform, it is manifestly impossible for the Corporation Commission to undertake this close oversight on the banks.

The choice is clearly between real reform and make-shift legislation. The former, if urged by the people and carried through by a united effort, can keep the bureau out of politics, can make examination effective and can insure the interests of individual depositors. Make-shift legislation will only make bad conditions worse.

**HIGHER STANDARDS FOR THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL.**  
The description of the new High School printed in yesterday's Times-Dispatch indicates that Richmond's dream has been realized. If the work has been properly done the new High School will rank with the best and most modern in the entire country. The arrangement seems to be well-nigh ideal, with study halls, an auditorium, well ventilated classrooms, retiring rooms, a gymnasium, laboratories, shops, elevators and offices—everything, in short, that is either necessary or desirable for the students of the city.

This is what Richmond wants. The tax-payers of the city desire the best educational advantages for their children, and are willing to pay for it. With a new and modern structure in place of the dilapidated old building, their wants should be supplied.

But a new building is only half way to the goal. The people want higher standards in their new High School. It is generally conceded, we believe, that the standards of the old High School have not been all that could be desired. Inadequate equipment and cramped quarters prevented the authorities from enlarging their work in the line of the most recent educational advance. They could not teach the lessons of to-day with the equipment of thirty years ago. Now that they have a new building, fully equipped and amply large, the city will require of them an advance in the standard of work.

There is no reason why the Richmond High School should be excelled by any school of its class in the country, if the authorities will make full use of their new opportunities. Let us have exact and broad methods, scientific ideas of education and the best faculty that money can procure. Richmond will not be satisfied with less.

**SUPERVISING THE CENSUS SUPERVISORS.**  
President Taft's directions to Secretary Nagel indicate that we are to have a statistical and not a political census. Following his announced purpose to divide the supervisors between the Republicans and the Democrats, in the States controlled by the latter, Taft's order that the supervisors are not to dabble in politics is a welcome announcement. On this point he speaks in positive terms:

"Any supervisor or enumerator who uses his influence with his subordinates or colleagues to assist any party or any candidate in a primary or general election, or who takes any part, other than merely casting his vote, in politics, national, State or local, either by service upon a political committee, by public addresses, by the solicitation of votes, or otherwise, shall be at once dismissed from the service."

If this policy is carried out it will be a long step towards ending the scandals of the census service, and it may transform to its legitimate function what has heretofore been little more than a political feast. The division of the immense census patronage has been comparatively a minor evil beside the inefficient results and tremendous financial waste under the old system. The employment of census "experts," whose knowledge consisted in adroit political manipulations, cost the government many millions in 1900, while the bungling work of these men produced a census of small value. Indeed, economists and statisticians were unanimous in agreeing that the census of 1900 was of suggestive value only.

The returns and summaries were in some instances so inaccurate as to be practically useless.

Roosevelt's veto of the February bill removed some of the obstacles in the way of a scientific census; Taft's new instructions have removed others. Only one thing now remains to be settled. The supervisors are to keep out of politics, but they have the choice of many enumerators in their hands, a political temptation of immense magnitude. Who is to supervise the supervisors? Will that task fall upon the Director of the Census, and will he make a determined effort to see that the letter and the spirit of Taft's order is obeyed? Upon the answer to this question depends the real value of the census and the true success of the census service, more than upon iron-clad instructions and threats of immediate discharge.

**THE PRESS AS A SCANDAL MONGER.**

The recently printed stories of the Thaw insanity hearing have revived the numerous charges that the newspapers of the country pander to morbid tastes. The press is represented, in some quarters, as parading crime and vice, while it excludes items that have a legitimate claim upon the attention of the public.

The justice of such charges depends altogether upon the class of newspaper considered. A few sheets, which, by common consent, have been dubbed "yellow," are not representative of the entire American press, and their glaring headlines of murder stories are not indicative of the real spirit of American papers.

But even when this distinction is overlooked, the newspapers cannot justly be held up as flouters of vice. A careful study of their average contents, from day to day, will show that stories of crime and scandal are not a predominant feature of their news. This is clearly shown by the following table, prepared by A. I. Street, of Chicago, after an examination of more than 7,300 news items in many newspapers.

No. Items.	Total crimes and scandals
1,343	
Educational and scientific	207
Medical and surgical	268
Religious	290
State and city news	695
Panics, banks, business	442
Railroads	1,140
War	2,240
President of the United States	550
Prominent men	527
Labor	659
Total	7,348

It thus appears that crimes and scandals of all classes—from local police court reports to scandals of national interest—receive but little more newspaper attention than the doings of the railroads, and but little more than half the notice given foreign affairs.

But even at this, the case of the newspapers is not fully stated. Much of the criminal news printed is legitimate and useful. Frequently it gives information that leads to the detection of crime and prevents its repetition. Nor is this all. Every newspaper, it is safe to say, rejects as more criminal news as it prints. Correspondents frequently submit to the newspapers stories of crime or scandal that have been thrown out, merely and solely because the average paper does not wish to burden its columns with such matters.

In one sense, the blame for the "featuring" of crime and scandal rests upon the public. News stories of sensational crime are read where speeches or local reports are neglected, and they add to the marketable value of a paper. In this way the journal that will ponder to the popular taste for the morbid can generally outstrip its rival that rigorously excludes the sensational. But with the knowledge of these facts before it, the average American paper aims to reduce the amount of scandal it prints, while keeping its columns newsy, readable and wholesome.

**THE HOME OF THE LEES.**  
The plan to preserve Stratford Hall, the ancestral home of the Lees of the moreland county, Va., should receive the cordial encouragement and practical support of all broad-minded and patriotic Americans. The project is in no respect sectional. It originated with Virginia Camp, Patriotic Order of the Sons of America, but it has the hearty endorsement of the State camps of Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New Jersey. It is proposed to buy the property after a fund of \$100,000 has been raised, to make necessary repairs to the buildings, and to convert the property to the State of Virginia as a national memorial of the Lees of Virginia, whose names are so large on the pages of American history.

The United States is a comparatively young nation, but not so young that it should give no thought to the preservation of its historic places. Stratford Hall should be a national memorial, a shrine to which all Americans can pay tribute to its greatness and nobility of Robert E. Lee in war and in peace. For Lee, as a former Roman Catholic, was a man of broad sympathies, and his name is a link with the nobility of Robert E. Lee in war and in peace. For Lee, as a former Roman Catholic, was a man of broad sympathies, and his name is a link with the nobility of Robert E. Lee in war and in peace.

**THE BACILLUS OF BEAUTY.**  
London Scientist Claims New Discovery Will Make All Women Beautiful.  
A man of science has arisen to announce a discovery which it is claimed by experiment will place the world's women in the hands of a great benefactor of the race. He has discovered a bacillus which, injected under the skin, is guaranteed to make the most homely woman beautiful in a few hours, even in a few minutes under favorable circumstances. The bacillus is a tiny, rod-shaped organism, which is not highly utilitarian and sociological.

**NAVY DEPARTMENT CONSIDERING ADOPTION OF 14-INCH TYPE.**  
According to a dispatch from the Tribune's Washington bureau, the wisdom of enlarging 14-inch guns in the Navy Department. It has been definitely decided not to install them in the Navy Department. It has been definitely decided not to install them in the Navy Department.

**THIEVING A LOSING GAME.**  
Professional Burglars Make Small Profits by Their Work.  
By many a day, the burglar's life is a complete record of his operations as a burglar in Pennsylvania shows that he has "bagged" about \$100 from 100 "jobs." It happens that at this same time a man arrested in New York after a brief but successful career as a flat-burglary declares: "I haven't made expenses while I have been at it." These instances recall the case of Henry Murphy, alias Suffrage, alias other things, whose record as a thief, as a burglar, and as a criminal, is a complete record of his operations as a burglar in Pennsylvania shows that he has "bagged" about \$100 from 100 "jobs."

**A NEW COUNTRY SHIRINE.**  
The veterans of Fluvanna county have determined to make their courthouse a county shrine. Following the example of Judge T. R. B. Wright, and the suggestion made some weeks ago by this paper, they propose to gather in their courthouse memorials of the men who ennobled the county's name in bygone years. They plan to place the portraits of these men upon the walls of the courthouse, where they may look down upon future generations.

**Borrowed Jingles.**  
JUST A LITTLE CONTRARY.  
I'm an odd old fellow, I'm free to admit—  
As odd as they make 'em, an' proud of it!  
I hate all grooves an' runs an' forms,  
I'm a running an' rolling an' a-rolling.  
Whatever a plan is got to see,  
I said wack back in sixty-three.  
I want to be a little contrary,  
I want to be a little contrary.

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**The Courts of Europe**  
By La Marquise de Fontenay.

**Holy Father in Bad Health.**  
Although none of the returning dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church have been visiting Rome, an affable and agreeable man, who is supposed to be the Pope's confidential man, has expressed to their friends the condition of health of the Holy Father. He himself is extremely sensitive on the subject, and the chief authorities at the Vatican take exception to any remarks of a nature to indicate that he is in the slightest degree ailing. The fact of the matter is, however, that within the last few months Pius X. has suffered such an alarming diminution of strength as to very seriously concern his medical advisors. Dr. Tacchini and Dr. Marchisiani, it is not that the Pope is suffering from any particular organic disease, but that he is suffering from a general debility of the system, which is the result of old age and of the rapid development of lassitude and weakness. He seems to be shrinking in size; an impression which is emphasized by the fact that the body has become in a measure bent, and those who have seen him lately have been struck by the main and wearying quality of body and mind. Not that his intellect is in any way affected. It is merely that he is weary, and that he is weary.

**MENTIONED IN PASSING.**  
NUMBER of women in Massachusetts pleaded with the police to give up a baseball umpire to the crowd that was gathered in front of the State House. The women are fully capable of entering, like men, into the principles of popular government. Philadelphia American.

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**STATE PRESS**  
The Dangers of the Primary.  
We are convinced that the State Democratic Convention will be held in the jeopardy in which the party is placed by the operation of the present imperfect primary system. The danger which is pointed out by our contemporary does not necessarily confirm the suspicion that existing conditions are so serious as to require a change for a purpose, but the suspicion is certainly strengthened.

**THE PRIMARY PLEDGE.**  
Quite a number of voters who took part in the primary are trying to convince themselves that they are not under obligation to support Judge Mann because they have pledged on the ballot to support him in the election, and others have taken the ground that if the pledge was not on the ballot it becomes null and void as far as it affects those who voted the ballot with the pledge, and leave the voter free to support the candidate of his choice in the general election.

**LOCAL OPTION IN NORFOLK.**  
It is reported that the Anti-Saloon League contemplates an early submission to the qualified voters of Norfolk whether or no the traffic in intoxicants shall be placed under the ban of law. So far as it is the undoubted right of those who believe in prohibition to take the sense of the electorate on the subject, we think we insist it is that when the will of a majority shall have been ascertained the result should be the status quo.

**WANTS THE ROADS RECONSTRUCTED.**  
The discovery of an abundance of good road-making stone within easy access of the roads in Spotsylvania should forever put at rest the question of the reconstruction of the roads. With plenty of granite at hand, and with the means to make them, the roads would be reconstructed with less expense than many of the counties of the State. The \$100,000 to be obtained from the sale of the stone would be more than first expense. Spotsylvania has a tremendous advantage in the possession of an abundance of good road-making stone.

**ATTACK ON GENERAL LEE ANSWERED.**  
Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir—The besotted and characteristically Bourbon editorial in a morning Republican newspaper of St. Louis in regard to placing a statue of General Robert E. Lee in the Federal Capitol is so grossly untrue and so completely devoid of any basis in fact that it is impossible to get into anything.

**VOICE OF THE PEOPLE.**  
The writer of that editorial would exclude the statue because, forsooth, to his malignant heart and narrow brain, General Lee led the Southern army in the Civil War between the States, and is not, next to Washington, Virginia's greatest son.

**THE WATERLESS BATH.**  
New York Medical Journal Proposes New Style of "Washing."  
Science has overthrown so many fixed ideas of popular notions, and not infrequently it has, like high courts, reversed itself. Paradoxes become mere truisms, and the old is discarded in favor of fuller knowledge, and fads are incorporated into the body of conservative truth.

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**THE ATTACK ON HONOR.**  
Inventing Red Army Will Have Its Problems When It Reaches the City.  
In all the grim panoply of war the "Red" Army is massing for the capture of Boston. New Bedford has already fallen, seized as a base by the invading forces. The panic in the business offices of Washington and Tremont Streets and among the care-takers of the Back Bay is akin to that which possessed the ancient Romans when Astur stormed Janiculum and the stout guards were slain. We can only pray that all will yet be well; that the old-fashioned sanctity of the Common preserved. Tom Lawson relieved of the apprehension of tribute, and the other citizens of the Hub despoiled of not even so much as a single bean.

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